

Hundreds and perhaps thousands of once-young men are, today, better husbands, fathers, and citizens because of the positive influence of Coach Blakeney; a good man who used the game of football to teach integrity, character, and perseverance throughout his entire career.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to acknowledge Coach Blakeney's positive impact on young people in Alabama, to celebrate his remarkable career, and to honor his place among the greatest college football coaches to walk the sidelines in my state.

IN RECOGNITION OF JIMMY CATES

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jimmy Cates who is retiring as Public Works Manager of the City of North Richland Hills after a 30 year career with the City's Public Works Department. As Manager of Public Works, Mr. Cates was responsible for the operations of the city's streets, transportation, water distribution, and wastewater systems. These responsibilities include the duties assigned to the Divisions of Streets and Drainage, Transportation and Water/Sewer Maintenance and Repair. Ultimately, Mr. Cates ensured that the citizens of North Richland Hills had an efficient, effective and safe transportation system, water supply, sewer and stormwater system which would meet the needs of current and future residents.

A graduate of Indiana University, he is a member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), American Public Works Association (APWA), International Municipal Signal Association (IMSA), Texas Water Utilities Association, and the American Water Works Association (AWWA).

I am honored to represent Mr. Cates and the City of North Richland Hills in the U.S. House of Representatives, and I gladly join the City and the appreciative citizens of the 26th Congressional District, whom he has dutifully served throughout his career.

RECOGNIZE THE SERVICE OF KUO-YU HANS CHIAO

HON. DENNIS A. ROSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the service of Kuo-yu Hans Chiao. Mr. Chiao is the outgoing Senior Officer in the Congressional Liaison Division of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative office, TECRO. Mr. Chiao is returning to Taiwan for his next assignment in the Department of North American Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan). During his service as the TECRO contact for my office, as well as the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate Committee on Finance, and House Committee on Ways and Means, Mr. Chiao has served as an invaluable resource for my staff and me.

In 2009, Mr. Chiao was hand-picked to serve as a congressional liaison for TECRO.

During his 6 year tenure in this position, Mr. Chiao developed a strategy that pro-actively expanded partnerships with key U.S. congressional offices to enhance Taiwan's impact and credibility in Washington. Mr. Chiao worked tirelessly to garner support for S. 1683 that would allow the transfer of naval vessels to Taiwan. This legislation passed the Senate and the House, and was signed into law in December 2014. Mr. Chiao was also part of the TECRO team that worked toward the passage of H.R. 1151, which directs the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to obtain observer status for Taiwan at the triennial International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly (ICAO). This became public law in July 2013. Additionally, Mr. Chiao organized and oversaw many Congressional Member and Staff Delegation visits to Taiwan, forging solid ties between our two countries.

Mr. Chiao has served in Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2005. Early in his diplomatic career, he served in Department of North American Affairs. Mr. Chiao received a Bachelor of Arts degree from National Taiwan University, majored in Foreign Languages and Literatures and minored in Political Science.

Though Mr. Chiao secured many legislative victories for Taiwan while he served in Washington, D.C., he made even more long-lasting relationships. My colleagues and our staff are proud to call him a friend, and we hope to see him back in Washington, D.C. one day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and was not present for three roll call votes on Monday, January 12, 2015. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

Roll Call Vote #17—Clay Hunt SAV Act—YES.

Roll Call Vote #18—Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act—YES.

Roll Call Vote #19—Journal Vote—YES.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,085,826,074,241.57. We've added \$7,458,949,025,328.49 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$7.4 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CELEBRATING THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARTIN LUTHER KING OBSERVANCE COMMITTEE

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Martin Luther King Observance Committee, located in Morristown, New Jersey as it celebrates its 45th Anniversary.

Since 1970, the Committee, under the leadership of Dr. Felicia B. Jamison, has engaged the involvement of the whole Morris County community in programs and services that commemorate the extraordinary life and accomplishments of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Each year, the Committee encourages the community to join together in celebrating the birth of Dr. King by promoting and preserving his legacy.

January 19, 2015 marks the 30th year that Dr. King's birthday will be commemorated as a National Holiday. Dr. King would have turned 86 this year, calling all Americans to remember his incredible life, and the impact his legacy has had on the course of American history. Fifty-two years ago, Dr. King stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, here in our nation's capital, to deliver his famous "I Have a Dream" speech to those participating in the March on Washington. In his speech, which proved to be a defining moment in the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. King charged Americans, "As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead." In celebrating the life of Dr. King as a holiday each year, we renew our pledge to continue in his legacy and promote the complete equality of all people in this nation.

Though it has only been a National Holiday for 30 years, the Martin Luther King Observance Committee has celebrated the birth of Dr. King for 45 years under the direction of Dr. Felicia B. Jamison. This year, to celebrate their anniversary in conjunction with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the Committee will hold two events on January 19th. First, their 30th Annual Interfaith Breakfast will begin the day by gathering all members of the community in celebration, as well as reflection on the legacy left by Dr. King. Following the breakfast, the committee will hold their 45th Annual Service of Celebration, properly honoring the life accomplishments of Dr. King and his influence in the Civil Rights Movement.

The Morris County community of all ages or economic status, of all religious persuasions, and of all political affiliations have recognized and acknowledged the invaluable contributions Dr. King has made to each and every American. That is why the theme of the Committee's celebration this year is appropriately titled "The Dream is Freedom; The Outcome is A Community of Persons." Regardless of the various differences that define us, all Americans can recognize and celebrate the influential legacy of a great American, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Just last year, we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, which you, Mr. Speaker, called possibly "the most consequential piece of legislation" in history. At the ceremony, Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King posthumously received a Congressional Gold Medal for their accomplishments. The

Martin Luther King Observance Committee has expressed renewed encouragement in celebrating their 45th Anniversary, due to these awards recently presented to the Kings.

I commend the members of the Martin Luther King Observance Committee, especially committee chair Dr. Felicia B. Jamison, for their dedication to promoting the rich legacy of the life and works of the Dr. King. Through the annual celebration of Dr. King's birth, the Committee has consistently demonstrated a dedication and commitment to advancing his philosophy and teachings.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Martin Luther King Observance Committee as it celebrates its 45th Anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW COLUMBIA ADMISSION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the New Columbia Admission Act with 93 original cosponsors, a record number. I am introducing the District of Columbia statehood bill as my first bill for the 114th Congress, an indication of its importance to the residents of the District of Columbia. This bill got its first-ever Senate hearing last Congress, ensuring that statehood is on the congressional agenda. Residents were so encouraged by the prospect of the first Senate hearing on our bill that more DC residents attended than had come to any DC hearing in memory. Their enthusiasm reflects that residents of our nation's capital have always been citizens of the United States but remain the only taxpaying Americans who do not have full and equal citizenship rights. The denial of local control of local matters and of equal representation in the Congress of the United States can be remedied only by statehood.

Therefore, I am introducing the New Columbia Admission Act to create a state from essentially the eight home-town wards of the District of Columbia. This 51st state, of course, would have no jurisdiction over the federal territory or enclave that now consists of the Washington that Members of Congress and visitors associate with the capital of our country. The U.S. Capitol premises, the principal federal monuments, federal buildings and grounds, the National Mall, and other federal property here would remain under federal jurisdiction. Our bill provides that the State of New Columbia would be equal to the other fifty states in all respects, as is always required, and the residents of New Columbia would have all the rights of citizenship as taxpaying American citizens, including two senators and, initially, one House member. The District of Columbia recognizes that it can enter the Union only on an equal basis and is prepared to do so.

The New Columbia Admission Act was the first bill I introduced after I was first sworn in as a Member of Congress in the 102nd Congress in 1991. Our first try for statehood received significant support in the House. In 1993, we got the first and only vote on statehood for the District, with nearly 60% of Democrats and one Republican voting for the

New Columbia Admission Act. The Senate held a hearing on various approaches to representation, but the committee of jurisdiction did not proceed further. In the 113th Congress, our statehood bill got unprecedented momentum with the Senate's first-ever hearing on statehood, which was the first congressional hearing held on statehood in more than 20 years, since the House held its hearing on statehood in 1993, and obtained a record number of cosponsors in the House and Senate, including Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID, as well as the other top three Democratic leaders in the Senate. In addition, President Obama endorsed DC statehood in a public forum before the statehood hearing was held.

Statehood is the only alternative for the citizens of the District of Columbia. To be content with less than statehood is to concede the equality of citizenship that is the birthright of our residents as citizens of the United States. That is a concession no American citizen has ever made, and one DC residents will not make as they approach the 214th year in their fight for equal treatment in their country. This bill reaffirms our determination to obtain each and every right enjoyed by citizens of the United States, by becoming the 51st State in the Union.

CLAY HUNT SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR AMERICAN VETERANS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, January 12, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 203, the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans (SAV) Act, which will help stem the epidemic of veteran suicide.

Tragically, an estimated 22 veterans commit suicide each day—more than 8,000 each year.

Of the more than 2 million Americans who have served in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is estimated that one-third, roughly 600,000 men and women, have traumatic brain injury, PTSD or Depression.

Mr. Speaker, combatting the epidemic of veteran suicide must be one of the nation's highest priorities.

The bill before us is important to our nation and critically important to my home state of Texas, which has one of the highest rates of veteran suicide in the country.

According to an analysis conducted by the Houston Chronicle, suicides among Texans under the age of 35 who had served in the military "jumped from 47 in 2006 to 66 in 2009—an increase of 40 percent."

According to that same analysis, "last year, suicides made up nearly 25 percent of the deaths of Texans younger than 35 who served in the military. That percentage is more than twice the rate of suicide in the comparable civilian population."

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 203 expands access to mental health services for our nation's veterans and increases the capacity and efficiency of VA care to deal with the more than one million veterans returning from war.

Our veterans deserve to have our support. These individuals put their lives on the line for our country to stay safe.

Specifically, H.R. 203, which enjoys broad and deep bipartisan support:

1. Establishes a peer support and community outreach pilot program to assist transitioning service members with accessing VA mental health care services.

2. Requires the VA to create a one-stop, interactive website to serve as a centralized information source regarding all mental health services for veterans.

3. Takes steps to address the shortage of mental health care professionals by authorizing the VA to conduct a student loan repayment pilot program aimed at recruiting and retaining psychiatrists.

4. Requires yearly evaluations—with interim reports due in the first two years and a final report due the third year and every year after—conducted by a third party, of all mental health care and suicide prevention practices and programs at the VA to find out what is working and what's not working and to make recommendations to improve care.

Passing H.R. 203 is an essential first step in ensuring that our veterans are receiving the help and care they need.

I strongly support this legislation and urge all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 203.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SER- GEANT WILLIAM J. ROSSMAN JR.

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, January 13, 2015

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I am submitting this statement to honor the extraordinary life of a proud Wisconsinite, an American hero, and a friend: Sergeant William J. Rossman Jr. Sergeant Rossman recently passed away at the age of 91. He was a husband and father, a decorated military veteran, and an outstanding member of his community. And despite his storied military career and numerous accolades, those who were fortunate enough to meet Sergeant Rossman know he preferred to go by the much more modest title of "Bill."

Bill was your typical World War II Veteran. He was proud of his service, but never one to boast or brag of his accomplishments. He understood the true meaning of service: that you put others ahead yourself. And he practiced this throughout his entire life, whether it was with his family, his work, or his community. But it was nearly 71 years ago, during his time fighting in the war, that Bill performed an act of service that still leaves me in awe to this day.

On February 14, 1944, after bombing the marshalling yards at Verona, Italy, Bill's B-24 Liberator was hit by a fierce concentration of flak that knocked out two of its engines. Unable to keep up with the bomber formation, six Messerschmitt ME-109s attacked the bomber, knocking out a third engine and starting a fire. The pilot, Lt. Robert Gernand, rang the alarm bell and ordered the crew to bail out of the aircraft. The bomber was in flames and falling in a tight spiral, quickly losing altitude. Under these dire circumstances, it would have made sense for Bill to follow the orders of Lt. Gernand and immediately do what was necessary to protect his own life. But that's not